UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/PRST/1997/43
13 August 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3810th meeting of the Security Council, held on 13 August 1997 in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council is deeply concerned about the situation in the Republic of the Congo following the outbreak of factional fighting in Brazzaville on 5 June 1997. The Council is particularly concerned at the plight of civilians caught up in the fighting, which has resulted in widespread loss of life, displacement of the population and severe humanitarian conditions in Brazzaville. The Council considers that the situation in the Republic of the Congo is likely to endanger peace, stability and security in the region.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the efforts of the International Mediation Committee under the Chairmanship of the President of Gabon and the National Mediation Committee under the Chairmanship of the Mayor of Brazzaville to persuade the parties involved to reach agreement on a ceasefire and a peaceful settlement of the current crisis. It also affirms its support for the important and constructive role of the Joint United Nations/Organization of African Unity (OAU) Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region in these negotiations.

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the recent recurrence of fighting in Brazzaville, calls upon the two parties to the conflict to halt all acts of violence immediately and underlines the need to respect the ceasefire agreement signed on 14 July 1997. It also calls upon the two parties to resolve the crisis on the basis of the proposals submitted by the President of Gabon currently under discussion in Libreville, including agreement on an interim government of national unity and a timetable for the holding of Presidential elections.

"The Security Council recalls the letter of 20 June 1997 to its President from the Secretary-General (S/1997/483) drawing attention to the request of the President of Gabon for deployment of an appropriate force to Brazzaville, and the relevant letters to the Secretary-General from the President of the Republic of the Congo and the Secretary-General of the OAU

(S/1997/495, annexes I and II). The Council endorses the three conditions for the establishment of such a force set by the Secretary-General, namely complete adherence to an agreed and viable ceasefire, agreement to the international control of Brazzaville airport and a clear commitment to a negotiated settlement covering all political and military aspects of the crisis.

"The Security Council is of the view that, despite some positive political developments, these conditions have not yet been fulfilled and calls upon the parties to fulfil them without delay. The Council intends to take a decision on this matter once the Secretary-General has submitted a report to it on the question of the fulfilment of these conditions and containing recommendations on further United Nations involvement in the Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council also calls upon both parties to respect relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and to ensure safe and unimpeded access by international humanitarian organizations to persons in need of assistance as a result of the conflict, and in any other way to facilitate the effective implementation of humanitarian programmes.

"The Security Council will remain seized of the matter."